

Discovering Tut – Important Questions

Q. Who was King Tut? Why was a CT scan done on him?

Ans. King Tut was a boy King of Egypt who was the last heir of its powerful family. This family ruled it for centuries. His tomb was discovered in 1922 by Howard Carter. A CT scan was done on his mummy to get new clues about his life and death.

Q. What did the tourists in the burial chamber of King Tut do?

Ans. The tourists looked keenly at the murals on the walls of the burial chamber. They also peered at Tut's gilded face. Others stood silently thinking about the Pharaoh's curse. It was said that death or misfortune would fall upon those who disturbed him.

Q. What was the Pharaoh's curse? Who refers to it and in what context?

Ans. The Pharaoh's curse was that death or misfortune that would fall upon those who disturbed him. The silent visitors are the first to refer to it. Later on a guard joked nervously when the million dollar scanner stopped functioning because of the sand in a cooler fan.

Q. Which evidence proves the burial of Tut in March or April?

Ans. Tut's shroud was found adorned with faded garlands of willow and olive leaves, wild celery, lotus petals and cornflowers. Since some of them are available only at the end of winter season, Tut must have been buried in March or April.

Q. What is so special about the contents of Tut's tomb?

Ans. Stunning artifacts in gold found in Tut's tomb remain the richest royal collection ever found. These caused a sensation at the time of the discovery. Even now they get the most attention.

Q. List some of the adornments and golden objects on Tut's body?

Ans. King Tut had been lavished with glittering goods. These were precious collars, necklaces, bracelets, rings, amulets, a ceremonial apron, sandals, sheaths, etc. All these things including the coffin were made of pure gold. It was believed that he would take them with him in his journey beyond after death.

Q. What did Howard Carter find when he began investigating King Tut's three nested coffins?

Ans. Howard Carter opened the coffin. He found a shroud adorned with garlands of willow, olive leaves, lotus petals and cornflowers. When he finally reached the mummy he found the ritual resins had cemented it to the bottom of his solid gold coffin.

Q. What became a sensation when Howard Carter, the British archaeologist, discovered Tut's tomb in 1922?

Ans. King Tut's tomb was discovered by Howard Carter in 1922. Its contents in gold and their shine were meant to guarantee the King's resurrection. But nothing happened. These contents are the richest royal collection of Pharaoh's legend.

Q. What problem did Carter face when he reached the mummy? How did he find a way out?

Ans. Carter found that the ritual resins had become quite hard. These had fixed Tut to the bottom of his solid coffin. The heat of the sun could not melt it. So, the solid resins had to be chiseled away to free the King's remains from the box.

Q. Why did Egyptians resent Carter's investigations?

Ans. Egyptians took utmost pride in well being of their Pharaohs and never wanted anyone to disturb them. They always tried to preserve the Royal mummies intact. They believed that Howard Carter was just meddling with the peace of their popular child king and would cause harm and insult to its sanctity.

Q. What did Carter's men finally do to the mummy?

Ans. They removed the mummy's head and severed nearly every major joint. This they did to separate the body from the adornments. Then they reassembled the remains on a layer on sand in a wooden box with padding.

Q. What effect did Tut's demise have dynasty?

Ans. King Tutankhamun was the last pharaoh of his dynasty that ruled Egypt for decade. The dynasty rattled down after the demise of king Tut.

Q. Why is January 5, 2005 significant in Tutankhamun's Saga?

Ans. On this date for the first time Tutankhamun was removed from his tomb and taken to CT scanner brought there to probe the lingering mysteries surrounding the young ruler.

Q. How was the atmosphere when Tut's body was taken for CT scan?

Ans. Violent wind raised ghost like shapes of dust. Bulging clouds moved quickly across the desert sky and did the stars in the grey sky.

Q. How had archaeology changed substantially in the modern times?

Ans. Archaeology has changed substantially in the modern times. It now focuses less on treasures but more on other aspects of life and the mysteries of death. It also uses latest tools used in the field of medical technology.

Q. How did the workmen carry out the CT scanning of Tut's mummy? What happened thereafter?

Ans. The workmen took the mummy from the box and climbed a ramp and a flight of stairs. They rose it on a hydraulic lift into the trailer that held the scanner. Then it could be scanned but the sand entered the portable scanner. The replacement fans helped in its scanning.

Q. How can CT scan prove more effective than the X-ray?

Ans. In CT scan, hundreds of X-ray in cross section are put together like slices of bread to create a three dimensional virtual body. X-ray provides only a two dimensional image.

Q. How can diagnostic imaging be done now? What could it reveal about King Tut's mummy?

Ans. Diagnostic imaging can be done with computed tomography or CT. Hundreds of X-rays in cross section are put together like slices of bread to create a three dimensional virtual body. This could reveal how King Tut died and how old he was at the time of his death.

Q. Describe the scene around the place where King Tut's mummy had successfully been CT scanned.

Ans. The wind stopped when the workmen came down to the ground. The winter air lay cold and still like death itself. Just above the entrance to Tut's tomb stood Orion. It is the group of stars. The Egyptians knew it as the soul of Osiris, the God of after life. It watched over the boy King.

Q. How was king Tut's mummy scanned by the portable CT scanner?

Ans. King Tut's mummy was scanned by a portable CT scanner from head to toe. 1700 digital x-rays were created in cross section to find out the secret of his death. His head was scanned in thin slices of 0.62 mm. for intricate details.

Q. How did Zahi Hawass express his satisfaction as the results?

Ans. Zahi Hawass was greatly relieved. He said that he did not sleep the night before, not for a second. He was greatly worried. Now, he said he would go and sleep.

Q. How has Tut's mummy fascinated the scientists and commoners alike over the previous decades?

Ans. King Tutankhamun was the last Pharaoh left of his line. His funeral marked the end of a dynasty. He was laid to rest laden with gold as the royals in Tut's time were extremely wealthy and thought they could take their riches with them. His tomb was discovered by Howard Carter, an English archaeologist in 1922, more than 3000 years after his death. The rich royal collection of jewellery and golden artifacts fascinated Carter. Visitors thronged the boy King's tomb. The particulars of King Tut's death and its aftermath are not clear. He revealed a startling fact. The breastbone and front ribs of Tut were missing. On 5th January, 2005 a CT scan was done to obtain precise data for an accurate forensic reconstruction of King Tut. It was hoped that it would offer new clues about his life and death. Thus Tut's mummy has been the centre of fascination throughout the previous decades.

Q. Who was King Tut? What happened when his mummy was being CT scanned? What did the tourists do?

Ans. King Tut was just a teenager when he died. He was the last heir of a powerful family that ruled Egypt and its empire for centuries. He was laid to rest laden with gold and forgotten. In 1922, Howard Carter discovered his mummy and startling facts about him came to light. When his mummy was CT scanned on January 5, 2005, an angry wind began to blow. Dark clouds appeared in the sky. The tourists gazed at the murals on the walls in his burial chamber. They peered at the gilded face. Some tourists stood silently. They wondered if the Pharaoh's curse-death or misfortune falling upon those who disturbed him—was really true. But except a change in the weather nothing happened.

Q. What problems did Howard Carter face in regard to King Tut's mummy? What did he do to solve them?

Ans. At last Howard Carter, the British archaeologist, discovered King Tut's burial chamber and his gold coffin in 1922. When he opened the last coffin, he found that the ritual resins had hardened. It had cemented Tut to the bottom of his solid gold coffin. He tried to loosen it by putting the mummy in the scorching sunshine. But it did not happen. Then he said the material had to be chiseled away from beneath the limbs and trunk. It was to be done before it was possible to raise the King's remains. Carter defended it saying that the thieves would rip the mummy apart to remove the gold. So his men removed the mummy's head and severed nearly major joint. Then they reassembled the remains on a layer of sand. They put the mummy in a wooden box.

Q. "He was the last of his family line." What do you learn about Tut's dynasty from the extract 'Discovering Tut: The Saga Continues'?

Ans. Tut's grandfather, Amenhotep III was a powerful Pharaoh who ruled for almost four decades at the height of the dynasty's golden age. His son Amenhotep IV promoted the worship of the Aten, the sun disk. He changed his name to Akhenaten or 'servant of the Aten.' He moved his religious capital from the old city Thebes to the new city of Akhenaten. He further shocked the country by attacking Amun, a major God, breaking his images and closing his temples. Thus, the wacky King started one of the strongest periods

in the history of ancient Egypt. After Akhenaten's death a mysterious ruler named Smenkhare appeared briefly and departed without leaving any sign. Then a very young Tutankhaten took the throne. He is widely known today as King Tut. The boy King soon changed his name to Tutankhamun 'living image of Amun'. He supervised the restoration of the old ways. Tutankhamun ruled for about nine years and then died unexpectedly. The details of his passing away are not available. The modern world has speculated about what happened to him. How did he die and how old was he at the time of his death are two unanswered questions.

Q. What light does the chapter throw on King Tut's father or grandfather?

Ans. King Tut's father or grandfather was a powerful Pharaoh. They ruled Egypt for 40 years at the height of the 18th dynasty's golden age. His son Amenhotep IV succeeded him. He started certain changes. He promoted the worship of the Aten, the sun disk. He changed his name to Akhenaten, or 'Servant of the Aten.' He also moved the capital from Thebes to Akhenaten. It is now known as Amarna. He shocked the country by breaking the images of Amun, a major God images and closing his temples. After Akhenaten's death, Smenkhare ruled Egypt briefly. Then a very young Tutankhaten sat on the throne. He was the King Tut as known today. The boy King changed his name to Tutankhamun, 'living image of Amun.' He restored old ways. He ruled for nine years and then died unexpectedly.

Q. AR Williams says, "King Tut is in death as in life regally ahead of his countrymen." How far do you agree with the assertion and why?

Ans. Perhaps no other Pharaoh of Egypt has fascinated the public mind so greatly as the boyish King Tutankhamun. Although he died in his teens and ruled for about nine years only, he introduced certain changes during his brief rule. These were significant as they marked restoration of the old ways of the worship of Amun. The unanswered questions about the causes and modes of his death as well as his age at the time of death kept public curiosity alive. After his death, his body has been a centre of scientific examination. Howard Carter, the British archaeologist discovered Tut's tomb in 1922. In 1968, an anatomy Professor X-rayed the mummy. The Egyptian Mummy project began an inventory in late 2003. It has so far recorded 600 and is still continuing. The next phase of CT scanning with a portable CT machine began on Jan. 5, 2005. The pride of place went to King Tut, whose mummy was the first one to undergo CT scan. Hence, I fully agree with the assertion.